



HEARD FROM  
TED TODAY...

HE FINALLY DID  
IT...

TOOK ANOTHER SHOT  
AT LIFE AND MADE IT  
INTO HEAVEN THIS TIME  
WITH SHANNA.

LOTS OF  
BABIES, JUST  
LIKE SHE  
WANTED

WE COULDN'T  
TALK LONG,  
THOUGH.

NOT THAT I DIDN'T  
WANT TO, BUT ITS IN  
THE RULES -- NO OUTSIDE  
CONTACT,

THEY WON'T  
FIND OUT JUST  
THIS ONCE.

I HOPE NOT, AT  
LEAST...

I'D RATHER  
NOT MAKE  
THEM ANGRY.

IT WAS A LONG  
TIME AGO...

I LOOKED UP  
AND REALIZED I  
WAS ALL ALONE.



THE FEW  
PEOPLE I'D  
MADE FRIENDS  
WITH WERE  
GONE.

THEY MUST'VE  
GONE BACK  
TO TRY AGAIN  
TOO, I  
GUESS.

...BUT I WAS  
STILL HERE



I THOUGHT I'D MADE SOME GOOD PROGRESS... I KNEW WHY I WAS IN HELL, I  
KNEW WHAT I'D DONE WRONG, BUT I GUESS THAT WASN'T ENOUGH. THERE WAS SUPPOSED TO  
BE SOMETHING MORE TO GETTING OUT, BUT NO ONE SEEMED TO KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT.  
WOULD'VE BEEN NICE TO HAVE A HINT.



**KNOCK**  
JOHN?  
ARE YOU  
HOME?

THAT'S WHEN  
THEY CAME...

**KNOCK**



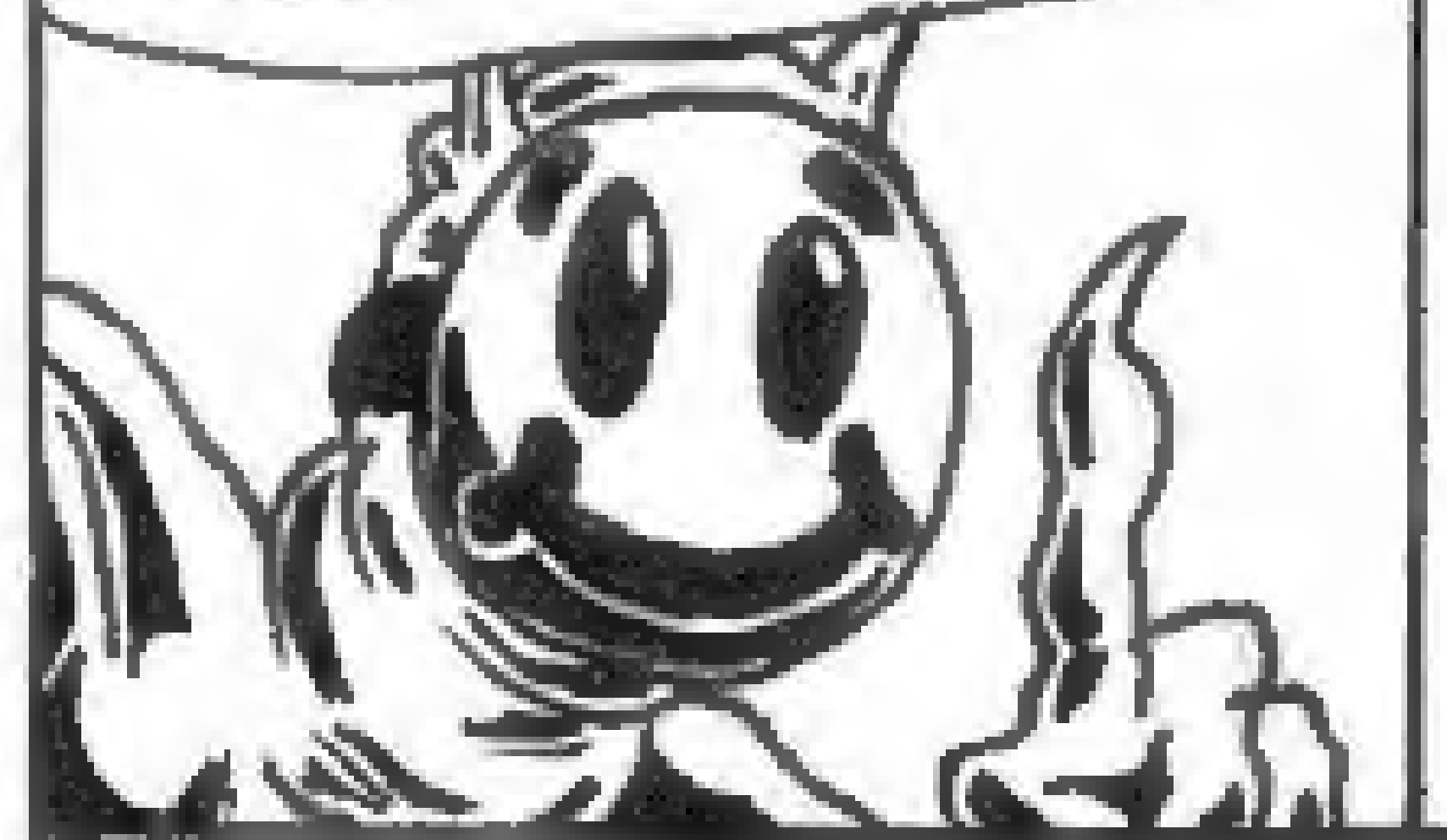
THEY SAID THAT THEY HAD HEARD ABOUT ME AND WANTED TO HELP. SAID THEY SPECIALIZED IN CASES LIKE MINE -- SOULS STUCK SOMEWHERE BETWEEN REDEMPTION AND DAMNATION.



THEY WANTED TO OFFER ME COUNSELING. THEY WOULD SHOW ME SALVATION WAS ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO PEOPLE LIKE ME.



BUT THEY NEEDED SOMETHING IN RETURN...



A BAG OF ROCKS.



NO BIG DEAL, THEY SAID. AN INITIATION OF SORTS. STARTING DOWN THE ROAD TO REDEMPTION WAS A BIG BURDEN AND I NEEDED TO PROVE I WAS READY TO BEAR IT.



I TOLD THEM I WOULDN'T LET THEM DOWN.



THEY SAID THAT THEY WOULD SEE ME IN A FEW DAYS.



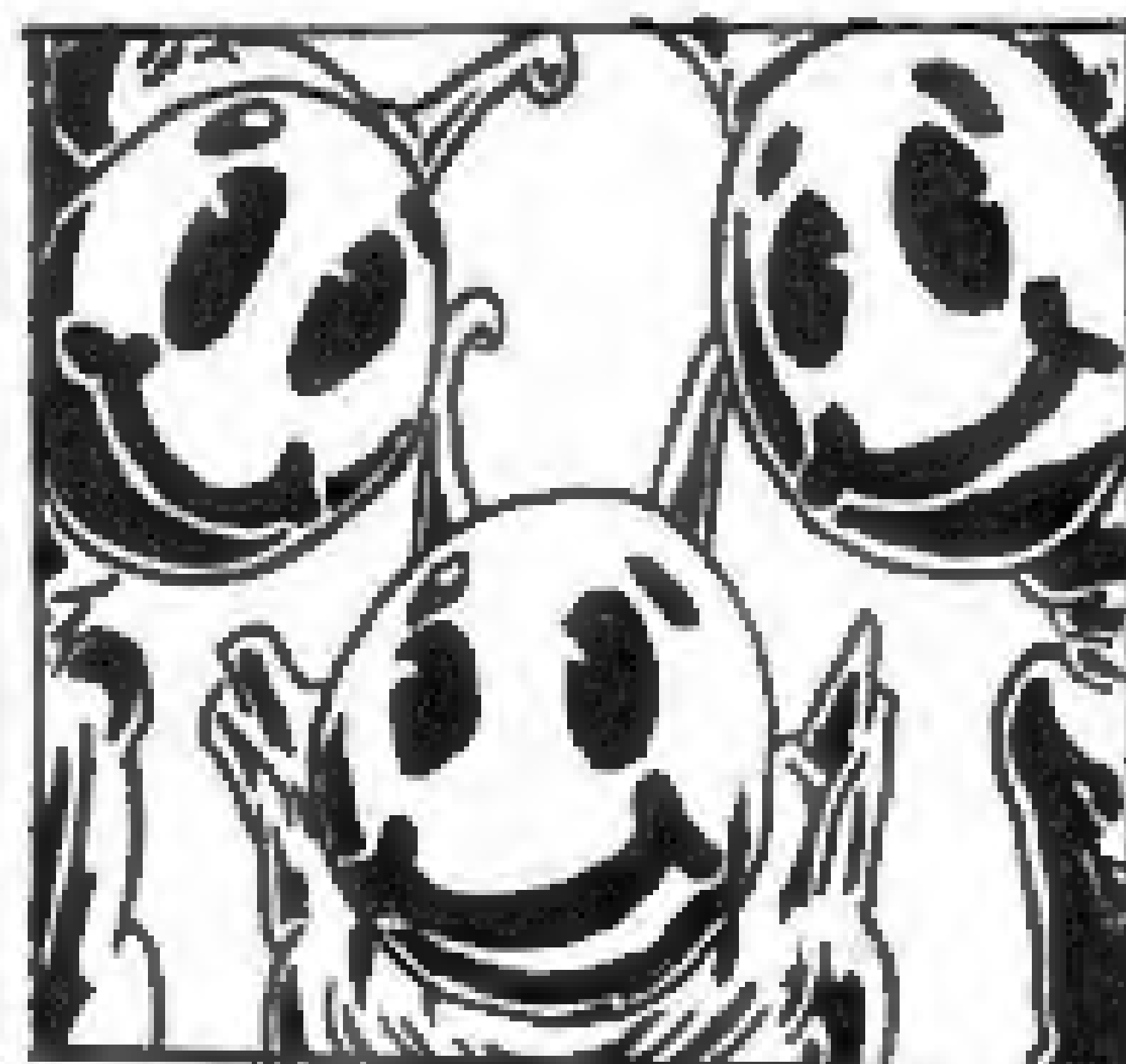


I WONDERED IF  
REDEMPTION WAS SUPPOSED  
TO BE DIFFICULT FOR  
A REASON...

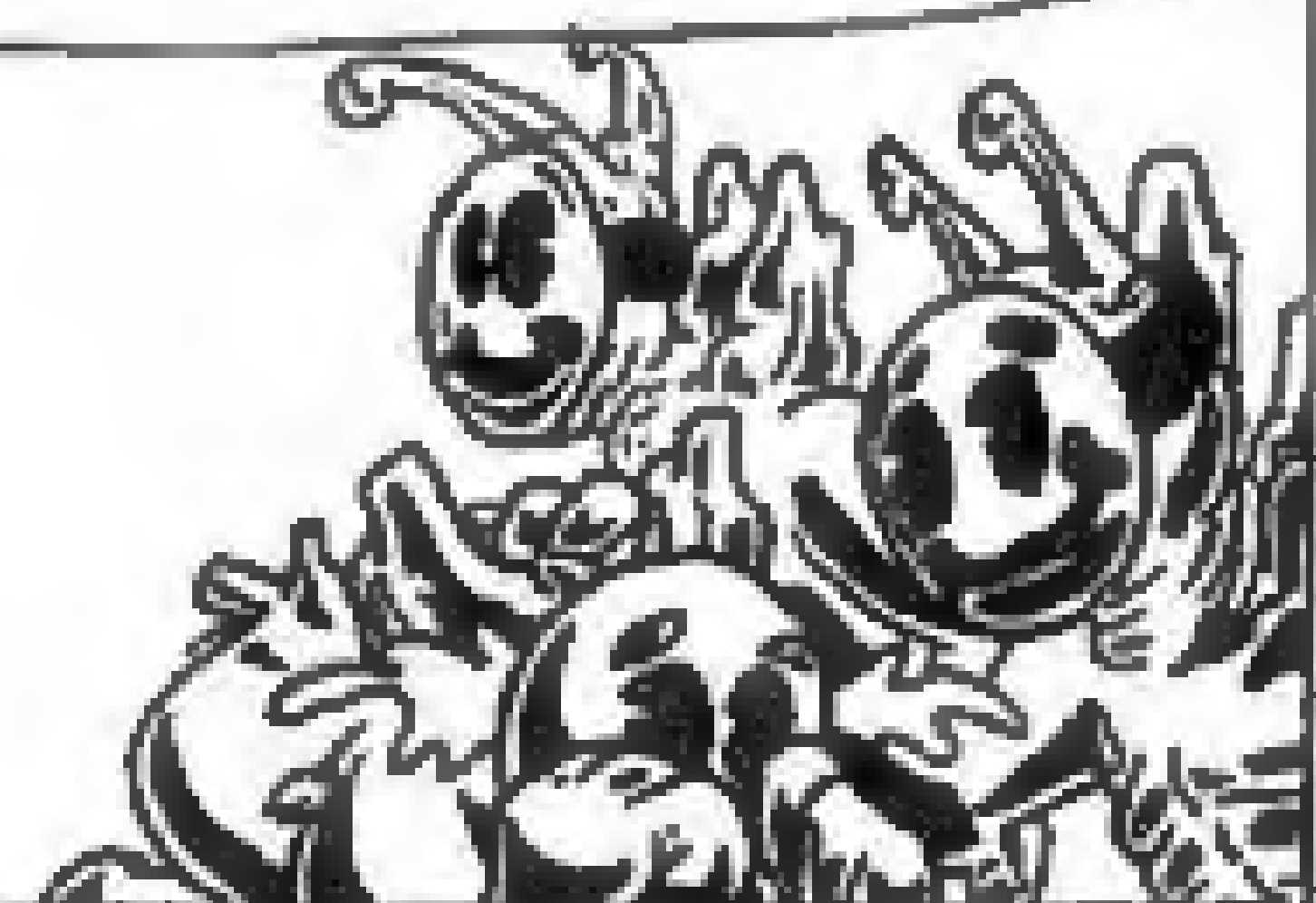
AND SOMETHING "COUNSELING"  
SHOULDN'T  
INTERFERE WITH.



THEY CAME BACK, THOUGH.  
JUST LIKE THEY SAID  
THEY WOULD.



I TOLD THEM IT WAS STUPID AND THAT I'D CARRIED  
MY "BURDEN" AS FAR AS I INTENDED TO. I TOLD THEM  
TO GO.



THEY TOLD ME IT WOULD TAKE TIME AND THAT I COULDN'T  
BE SO EAGER TO GIVE UP. THEY ASKED ME TO TRY IT AGAIN  
AND SINCE I'D BACKSLID, IT WOULD BE JUST A LITTLE  
HEAVIER THIS TIME.





I HAD MY DOUBTS  
ABOUT IT...

BUT IN THE END THEY  
WERE VERY CONVINCING.



JUST A LITTLE FURTHER TO GO, AND I'D FIND HAPPINESS. THEY TOLD ME SALVATION WAS JUST  
AROUND THE CORNER IF I'D ONLY DO THIS MUCH FOR THEM.



I'D BEEN IN  
HELL FAR  
TOO LONG...

...AND I  
WANTED VERY  
MUCH TO BE  
HAPPY.

BEING ALONE WAS  
THE WORST PART



BUT EVERY TIME I THOUGHT  
I WAS REALLY MAKING  
SOME PROGRESS...



...I'D THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE  
NOT TO BE SURE OF WHILE I  
CARRIED MY BURDEN.



THEY SAID I WAS A DIFFICULT CASE, BUT THEY WOULD HELP ME THROUGH IT.  
...AND THE BURDEN GOT HEAVIER...









I KNOW MISERY  
LOVES COMPANY, BUT  
REALLY...HOW PETTY  
DO YOU HAVE TO BE  
TO BE UPSET AT  
SOMEBODY FOR  
BETTERING  
THEMSELVES?

AFTER THAT, THEY TOLD ME I WASN'T ALLOWED TO SPEAK  
TO OUTSIDERS ANYMORE OR MY CONDITION WOULD WORSEN.  
I NEEDED TO STOP BECOMING DISTRACTED...



...AND FOCUS ONLY ON  
THEM AND MY PROGRESS.

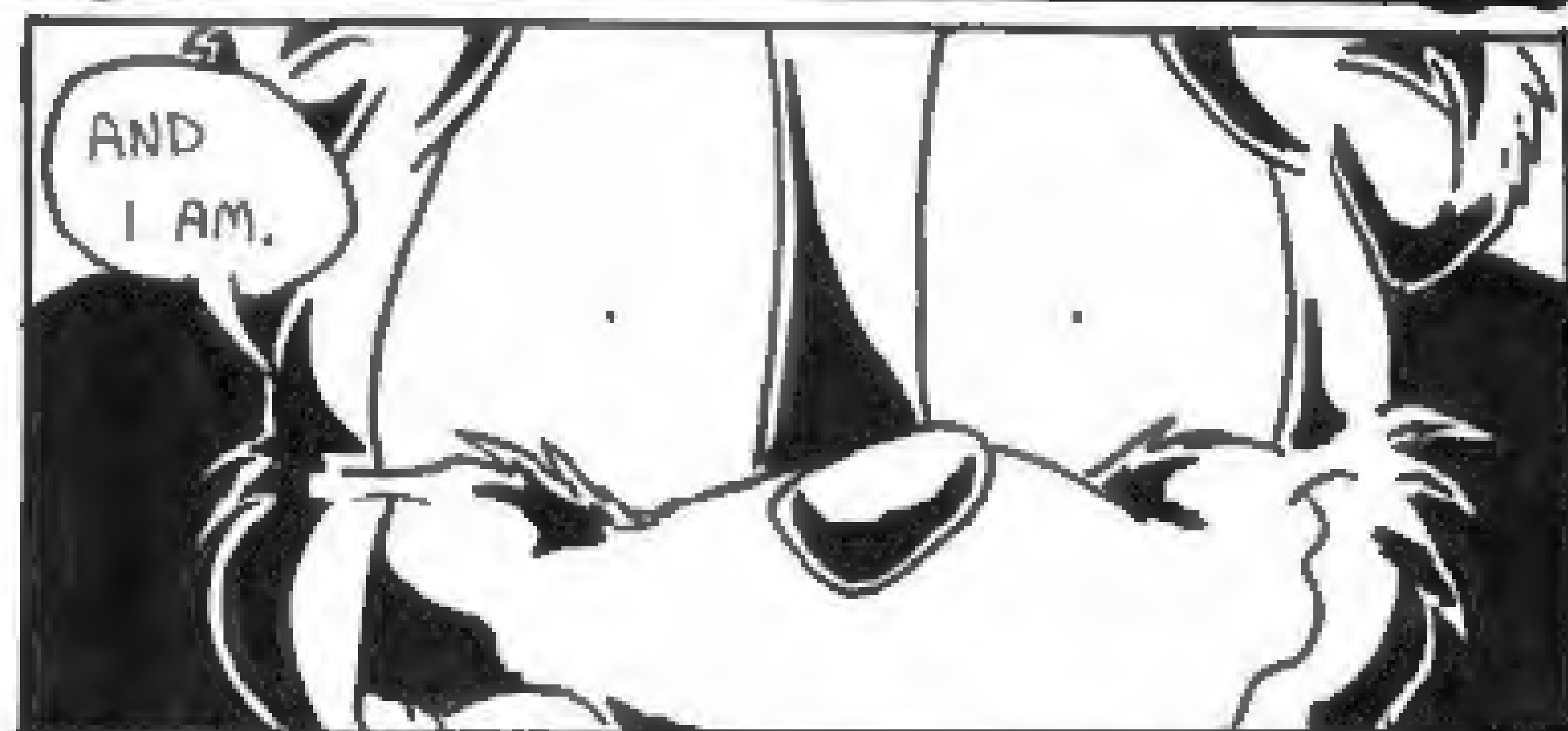


I HAD NO FRIENDS DOWN  
HERE ANYMORE. NO REAL  
FRIENDS...



I TOLD THEM I HAD NO  
OBJECTIONS.

FINALLY, THEY SAID I WAS READY.  
THEY SAID I HAD PROVEN MYSELF AND  
I COULD FINALLY JOIN THE OTHERS AND  
BE HAPPY.



AND  
I AM.

